

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 TRSE-00 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 INT-05 AGRE-00
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O P 311214Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO AMCONSUL BOMBAY IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL MADRAS IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0895

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 1406

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT IN
SUBJ: EMBASSY AND CONSULGENERAL ACTIVITIES DURING
INDIAN ELECTION CAMPAIGN

REF: A. BOMBAY 3497 (NOTAL) B. CALCUTTA 0188 (NOTAL)
C. MADRAS 0138 (NOTAL)

1. YOUR COMMENTS ON PROPOSED TRAVEL AND CONTACT
ACTIVITY DURING THE ELECTION PERIOD REFLECT A WIDE
CONSENSUS ON THE POTENTIAL PROBLEM PROPOSED FOR US
OFFICIALS OF UNJUSTIFIED INDIAN OFFICIAL SUSPICION
OF US INVOLVEMENT IN OR INTRUSION INTO INDIAN INTERNAL
AFFAIRS. WHILE WE ARE MOST INTERESTED IN OBSERVING
THE INDIAN ELECTION PROCESS IN ORDER TO ESTIMATE
TRENDS PRIOR TO THE POLL AND ANALYZE RESULTS THEREAFTER
AND TO MAKE INTELLIGENT COMMENTS ON HOW THE ELECTIONS
ARE CONDUCTED, WE DO NOT BELIEVE WE HAVE SUCH A NEED
FOR DETAILED AND ADVANCE INFORMATION TO JUSTIFY
INQUIRIES WHICH MIGHT STIMULATE GOI SUSPICIONS. WE
FURTHER BELIEVE THAT DURING THE CAMPAIGN WE SHOULD
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TRIM CERTAIN OTHER USG ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF THE
CITIES IN WHICH THE USG IS REPRESENTED.

2. IN REGARD TO ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO OBSERVE THE
INDIAN ELECTION PROCESS, WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING
GENERAL GUIDELINES. WE WISH TO EMPHASIZE, HOWEVER,
THAT WE CANNOT COVER ALL ASPECTS OF ACTIVITIES AND

THE CONSULS GENERAL, THEREFORE, SHOULD EXERCISE DISCRETION IN PROVIDING DETAILED GUIDANCE TO ALL USG REPRESENTATIVES AT THEIR POSTS:

A. USG OFFICERS SHOULD MAKE INQUIRIES REGARDING THE ELECTIONS AND ENGAGE IN DETAILED DISCUSSIONS OF THE ELECTIONS ONLY UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE CONSUL GENERAL OR POLITICAL COUNSELOR. WE WISH TO MINIMIZE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE INQUIRING ABOUT THE ELECTIONS AND ASSURE THAT THOSE WHO DO ARE FULLY UTILIZED IN OUR REPORTING.

B. WITH CERTAIN EXCEPTIONS AND SUBJECT TO THE JUDGMENT OF THE CONSULS GENERAL, AN AMERICAN OFFICER MAY VISIT EACH STATE CAPITAL AT SOME TIME PRIOR TO THE FIRST OF MARCH. SUCH TRIPS SHOULD BE ARRANGED IN ADVANCE WITH THE APPROPRIATE CHIEF SECRETARY, SHOULD INCLUDE THE USUAL CALLS ON SENIOR STATE OFFICIALS, MAY INCLUDE A CALL AT THE STATE CONGRESS PALACE HEADQUARTERS BUT SHOULD NOT INCLUDE CALLS ON OPPOSITION LEADERS. WE URGE CAUTION IN DISCUSSIONS WITH JOURNALISTS ON SUCH TRIPS BUT RECOGNIZE THEY ARE AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF INFORMATION. WE AGREE WITH CONSUL GENERAL MCCASKILL THAT A FURTHER TRIP TO KERALA IS NOT ADVISABLE. WE ALSO AGREE WITH CONSUL GENERAL COURTNEY THAT IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO MAKE A TRIP TO BHOPAL PRIOR TO THE ELECTIONS. GOI TRAVEL REGULATIONS AND THE SENSITIVITY OF THE AREA WILL PREVENT OUR VISITING THE STATES OF THE NORTHEAST. THE
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EMBASSY WILL VISIT JAIPUR AND LUCKNOW AND POSSIBLY CHANDIGARH BUT WILL COVER KASHMIR AND HIMACHAL FROM DELHI.

C. WE BELIEVE WE CAN AFFORD SOMEWHAT GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN ELECTION COVERAGE ACTIVITIES IN CITIES WHERE USG OFFICES ARE LOCATED. CAREFUL CONTACTS WITH OFFICIALS, JOURNALISTS AND CONGRESS PARTY LEADERS ARE IN ORDER. WE URGE CONSIDERABLE CAUTION IN REGARD TO AMERICAN CONTACTS WITH OPPOSITION LEADERS, PARTICULARLY THOSE FROM THE MORE CONTROVERSIAL PARTIES SUCH AS THE JANA SANGH AND THE DMK. THE CONSUL GENERAL (AND IN DELHI, THE CHARGE) SHOULD BE CONSULTED IN REGARD TO ANY PLANS FOR MEETINGS WITH THE OPPOSITION. IN DELHI WE PLAN VERY LIMITED CONTACTS AND WILL PROBABLY SEE NO OPPOSITION LEADER MORE THAN ONCE.

D. NO AMERICAN TRAVEL IN CONNECTION WITH THE ELECTIONS SHOULD BE SCHEDULED TO DISTRICT TOWNS. ALL OTHER TRAVEL SHOULD BE LIMITED AS INDICATED BELOW.

3. TRAVEL BY INDIAN EMPLOYEES MAY BE SCHEDULED SOMEWHAT MORE LIBERALLY THAN AMERICANS. IN THE CASE OF LEY STATES (E.G. BIHAR AND UP), INDIAN EMPLOYEES MIGHT VISIT THE STATE CAPITAL CLOSER TO ELECTION DAY. WE LEAVE TO CONSUL GENERAL DISCRETION REGARDING ACTIVITIES OF INDIAN EMPLOYEES, BEARING IN MIND OUR ACTIONS AND THAT THEY SHOULD STICK TO FAMILIAR CONTACTS, AVOID SEEING OPPOSITION LEADERS, AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT LOCAL HISTORIES OF SUSPICIONS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 NEW DELHI 1406

IN REGARD TO ALL OTHER TRAVEL, THE EMBASSY HAS COMPLETED A REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES BY ITS ELEMENTS AND CONCLUDED THAT MOST OF THOSE ACTIVITIES CAN CONTINUE AS SCHEDULED, SOME SHOULD BE POSTPONED, AND ALL SHOULD BE EXAMINED CAREFULLY IN REGARD TO THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY ARE CARRIED OUT. THE FOLLOWING GENERAL GUIDELINES COVER SUCH TRAVEL:

A. MOST ALREADY SCHEDULED USIS PROGRAMS CAN CONTINUE WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A COMMUNITY PROGRAM IN MYSORE (WHICH CAN PERHAPS BE CHANGED TO A SEMINAR ON VOCATIONAL TRAINING) AND A POLITICAL SCIENCE LECTURE PROGRAM ON US ELECTIONS WHICH WILL BE POST-

PONED. THE EMBASSY/CONSUL GENERAL PRESENCE AT SUCH PROGRAMS SHOULD BE LIMITED AND ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE CONFINED TO THOSE CONCERNING THE SUBJECT OF THE PROGRAM. USIS IS SENDING SEPARATE INSTRUCTIONS.

B. EMBASSY AND CONGEN TRAVEL RELATED TO REPORTING IN OTHER FUNCTIONAL AREAS SHOULD BE DEFERRED IF POSSIBLE UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTIONS. CERTAIN ACTIVITIES, CONFIDENTIAL

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SUCH AS THE EXAMINATION OF THE PROSPECTS FOR THE WHEAT CROP MUST CONTINUE AS PLANNED.

C. COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS THE ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT CATALOG EXHIBIT SHOULD GO AHEAD AS SCHEDULED. OTHER ACTIVITIES SUCH AS AN ORIENTATION TRIP BY AN OFFICER OF THE BUREAU OF MINES SHOULD BE POSTPONED.

D. CONSULAR INVESTIGATION TRIPS SHOULD PROCEED AS PLANNED UNTIL FEBRUARY 12, THE DATE UPON WHICH NOMINATIONS MUST BE FIRM. THEREAFTER INVESTIGATIONS SHOULD BE MADE ONLY IN CASES OF EMERGENCY. THERE SHOULD BE NO RESTRICTIONS ON JAIL VISITS.

E. THE CONSULS
(GENERAL SHOULD ALSO SCREEN
LEAVE TRIPS BY USG EMPLOYEES. VISITS TO TYPICAL TOURIST CITIES SUCH AS AGRA MAY CONTINUE BUT THOSE TO MORE REMOTE PLACES SHOULD BE POSTPONED. CONSULS GENERAL MAY, OF COURSE, EXERCISE DISCRETION IN THIS AREA.

F. AMERICAN STAFF TRIPS CONCERNING TITLE II FOOD PROGRAMS SHOULD BE DEFERRED UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTIONS. WE HAVE BRIEFED THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

ON SENSITIVITIES AT ELECTION TIME.

4. WE HAVE SENT A CIRCULAR MESSAGE TO NEIGHBORING POSTS CAUTIONING THEM ON OFFICIAL OR LEAVE TRAVEL IN INDIA AND ASKING THAT SUCH TRAVEL BE CLEARED WITH THE EMBASSY.
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Message Attributes

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